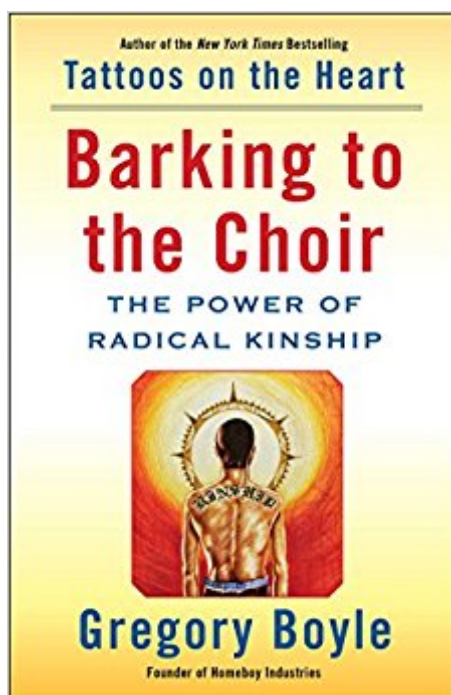


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# Barking To The Choir: The Power Of Radical Kinship



## Synopsis

A moving example of unconditional love in difficult times, the bestselling author of *Tattoos on the Heart*, Father Gregory Boyle, shares what three decades of working with gangs in Los Angeles has taught him about faith, compassion, and the enduring power of radical kinship. In his first book, *Tattoos on the Heart*, Father Gregory Boyle introduced us to Homeboy Industries, the largest and most successful gang-intervention program in the world. Critics hailed that book as an “astounding literary and spiritual feat” (Publishers Weekly) that is “destined to become a classic of both urban reportage and contemporary spirituality” (Los Angeles Times). Now, after the successful expansion of Homeboy Industries, Boyle returns with *Barking to the Choir* to reveal how compassion is transforming the neighborhood that boasts the highest concentration of murderous gang activity in Los Angeles. In a nation deeply divided and a neighborhood plagued by poverty and violence, *Barking to the Choir* offers a snapshot into the challenges and joys of life in “the barrio.” Jose, arrested at nine, in a gang by twelve, and serving time shortly thereafter, now works with the substance-abuse team at Homeboy to help young boys find sobriety. Andre, abandoned by his family when he tried to attend school at age seven, gradually finds forgiveness for his schizophrenic mother. New father Hector, who never knew his own father, thinks of a daily adventure story to tell his four-year-old son. These former gang members uplift the soul and reveal how bright life can be when filled with unconditional love and kindness. This collection is guaranteed to shake up our ideas about God and about people with a glimpse at a world defined by more compassion and fewer barriers. Gently and humorously, *Barking to the Choir* invites us to find kinship with one another and re-convinces us all of our own goodness.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PRAISE FOR TATTOOS ON THE HEART

“Destined to become a classic of both urban reportage and contemporary spirituality.”

•The Los Angeles Times“An astonishing book . . . about suffering and dignity, death and resurrection, one of my favorite books in years. It is lovely and tough and tender beyond my ability to describe and left me in tears of both sorrow and laughter.”

•Anne Lamott, author of *Grace (Eventually)*“One of the bravest, most humane, heartbreaking, brilliant, and hopeful stories I’ve read in ages. Father Greg, the Gandhi of the Gangs, fills *Tattoos* with unquenchable soul force and down-to-earth love.”

•Jack Kornfield, author of *A Path With Heart*“Father Boyle reminds us all that every single child and youth is a part of God’s jurisdiction—and when they know that we are seeing them as God does, they are capable of great things. Father Boyle is a national treasure.”

•Marian Wright Edelman, President, Children’s Defense Fund“Sometimes we are allowed to see in our own lifetimes what we were supposed to see in the life and ministry of Jesus. Read, and let your life be changed!”

•Father Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Center for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque, New Mexico“Incandescent, always hope-filled and often hilarious. Boyle somehow maintains an exuberant voice that celebrates the strength, compassion and humanity of people often demonized. He simply highlights charity and goodness wherever they are found. Boyle intersperses his narratives about gang members and his work with them with theological and spiritual reflections from a variety of theologians, poets and other writers. By introducing book-buying, highly educated readers to people we may never otherwise encounter, Boyle aspires to “broaden the parameters of our kinship.”

•The Christian Century“*Tattoos on the Heart* is an astounding book and a remarkable testament. No one brings more triumph and tragedy to the street gang story than Greg Boyle. No one brings more conviction and compassion than Greg Boyle. And no one writes the gang story more beautifully.”

•Malcolm Klein, Professor Emeritus, University of Southern California“*A spiritual masterpiece touching the innermost sanctum of the human soul. Boyle approaches each person as a child of God and fully deserving of love and compassion. His capacity to reach the heart of the most hardened, and to see the best in everyone, inspires. I laughed, wept, and underlined on virtually every page.*”

•Kerry Kennedy, founder of The RFK Center for Justice and Human Rights“An extraordinary reflection of a life totally committed to reshaping and redirecting the lives of countless young gang members (from L.A.’s gang culture), Greg Boyle’s *Tattoos on the Heart* proves one man with courage is a majority.”

•Martin Sheen“*Tattoos on the Heart* is an honest, raw, and compelling collection from

Father Greg Boyle's life and work with gang-involved youth. His commitment should teach us all a lesson in compromise, sharing, learning, loving, and, most important, living life to the fullest." —Anjelica Huston — "In this artful, disquieting, yet surprisingly jubilant memoir, Jesuit priest Boyle recounts his two decades of working with homies in Los Angeles County, which contains 1,100 gangs with nearly 86,000 members. . . . From moving vignettes about gangsters breaking into tears or finding themselves worthy of love and affirmation, to moments of spiritual reflection and sidesplittingly funny banter between him and the homies, Boyle creates a convincing and even joyful treatise on the sacredness of every life. Considering that he has buried more than 150 young people from gang-related violence, the joyful tenor of the book remains an astounding literary and spiritual feat." — Publishers Weekly (starred review) — "A set of stories that will stir many emotions. They will leave you dumbfounded at the power of love and compassion to break down high walls built by anger and pain." — America magazine "Jaw-dropping. Boyle take[s] us through the human lifecycle of fall/grace/redemption/repeat again and again. Reading this book is a spiritually cleansing experience that won't leave you the same. The compassion Boyle writes of is so deep and wide and strong that nobody is ever beyond its reach." Tattoos on the Heart welcomes all of us to join in the "no matter whatness" of God's unconditional love." — Sojourners

Father Gregory Boyle was ordained a Jesuit priest in 1984. He received his Master of Divinity from the Weston School of Theology and a Sacred Theology Masters degree from the Jesuit School of Theology. In 1988, Father Boyle began what would become Homeboy Industries, now located in downtown Los Angeles. Fr. Greg received the California Peace Prize, the "Humanitarian of the Year" Award from Bon Appétit; the Caring Institute's 2007 Most Caring People Award; and received the 2008 Civic Medal of Honor from the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. He is the author of Tattoos on the Heart and Barking to the Choir, for which he is donating all his net proceeds to Homeboy Industries.

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